



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
Great Government Through the General Management System – Quality, Timeliness, Value
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

CLASS SPECIFICATION

CLASSIFIED

DEPUTY PUBLIC DEFENDER I	Class No. 003910
DEPUTY PUBLIC DEFENDER II	Class No. 003911
DEPUTY PUBLIC DEFENDER III	Class No. 003912

■ CLASSIFICATION PURPOSE

To perform a wide variety of professional legal work in the defense of adults accused of crimes or on the behalf of children, who are dependents of the Juvenile Court; and to perform related work as required.

■ DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

Deputy Public Defenders are attorneys that provide legal services to adult defendants in criminal cases or children, who are alleged to have been abused and/or neglected. All positions in this series are allocated only to the Office of Public Defender.

Deputy Public Defender I: This is the professional, entry-level class in the series. Incumbents receive close supervision from experienced deputies and assist them in progressively more complex cases. Deputy Public Defender I's may be assigned to misdemeanor and preliminary felony hearings in Municipal Court or to the Juvenile Dependency Court during the first year of their training.

Deputy Public Defender II: This class is assigned a wider variety of cases and performs professional legal work of increasing complexity and charge severity under progressively less supervision. Incumbents independently prepare and try a variety of cases in Superior Court, or may represent children in dependency matters.

Deputy Public Defender III: This class is the fully skilled, defense attorney class in the series. Incumbents work with general instructions and guidelines, exercising discretion and independent judgment in the performance of their duties. They may function as lead workers, providing technical guidance to lower-level, deputy attorneys.

■ FUNCTIONS

The examples of functions listed in the class specification(s) are representative but not necessarily exhaustive or descriptive of any one position in the class(es). Management is not precluded from assigning other related functions not listed herein if such duties are a logical assignment for the position.

Deputy Public Defender I:

Essential Functions:

1. Provides legal counsel to, and represents, adult defendants in criminal cases or children, who are alleged to have been abused and/or neglected, when appearing before the courts of San Diego.
2. Prepares pleadings, motions, orders, and other papers required for trials, hearings, and other legal proceedings.
3. Makes motions for continuances, dismissals, reduction of bail, and new trials.
4. Handles preliminary hearings.
5. Interviews child clients and witnesses for testimony.
6. Works closely with investigators to prepare cases for hearing.
7. Handles uncontested and contested child case matters.
8. Conducts processing of misdemeanor cases through trial.
9. Evaluates social worker reports and investigation results.
10. Receives and reviews criminal complaints and discovery materials.

11. Assists an attorney of higher grade in the preparation and defense of more difficult criminal cases in Superior Court.
12. Dictates correspondence and prepares reports.
13. Provides courteous, high quality service to members of the public by personally responding to requests for service or appropriate referral.

Deputy Public Defender II:

Essential Functions:

All the duties listed above and

1. Prepares and conducts trial defenses for persons accused of misdemeanor and felony crimes.
2. Negotiates with judges and prosecuting attorneys on appropriate disposition of cases.
3. Determines and makes appropriate legal motions and pleas.
4. Orders investigations and subpoenas.
5. Prepares statements of mitigation under determinate sentencing laws.
6. Prepares mental, medical, and other defenses for jury trials.
7. May represent defendants in Juvenile Court.
8. May confer with Probation Department officers on laws and procedures relating to juveniles.

Deputy Public Defender III:

Essential Functions:

All the duties listed above and

1. Represents defendants in difficult criminal and civil cases in Superior, Municipal, or Juvenile Courts.
2. Identifies evidence and testimony to be obtained by defense investigators.
3. Reviews pathology, coroner, police, and probation reports.
4. Reviews psychological and medical evaluations.
5. Prepares referrals for expert opinion.
6. Prepares appropriate defense jury instructions, which address legal principles involved.
7. Performs specialized legal work, representing persons involved in litigation concerning juvenile crimes, civil insanity, sexual psychopaths, and narcotic law violations.
8. Confers with law enforcement officers, Deputy District Attorneys, and other experts or interested parties to determine appropriate legal defense and/or sentencing alternatives.

■ KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

Knowledge of:

- Rules of evidence and the conducts of court proceedings.
- Legal research methods.
- Criminal or Juvenile law and their related procedures in California.
- Duties, powers, limitations, and responsibilities of the Public Defender.
- Superior and Juvenile Court policies and procedures.
- Legal principles and their application.
- Terminology common to forensics, psychology, child abuse/neglect, domestic violence, and substance abuse.
- Telephone, office and online etiquette.
- County customer service objectives and strategies.

Deputy Public Defender II and III (in addition to the above):

- Federal criminal case and statutory law .

Skills and Abilities to (the following applies to all classes):

- Analyze legal problems and apply legal principles and practices.
- Perform legal research.
- Present statements of facts, law and argument clearly and logically, in written and oral form.
- Prepare and organize cases.
- Advocate criminal or dependency cases in trials.
- Work cooperatively with others.

Deputy Public Defender II (in addition to the above):

- Interpret and explain codes, statutes, procedures, and forms.
- Prepare, present and conduct criminal cases in court.

Deputy Public Defender III (in addition to the above):

- Plan, prepare, and conduct defense strategies for clients.
- Write, process, and present motions, writs, other legal documents, evidence, and testimony.
- Prepare correspondence and reports.
- Elicit and analyze information and facts .

■ EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE

Education, training, and/or experience that demonstrate possession of the knowledge, skills and abilities listed above. Examples of qualifying education/experience are:

Deputy Public Defender I: a Juris Doctor degree from an accredited school of law, AND active membership in good standing with the State Bar of California.

Deputy Public Defender II:

1. Twelve (12) months of experience in the practice of criminal or juvenile law, six (6) months of which must have been in the County of San Diego Public Defender's Office as a Deputy Public Defender I; OR,
2. One (1) year of experience as an attorney at an equivalent level with another California county or city; OR,
3. One (1) year of experience in the practice of criminal, dependency, and/or civil law. Civil law experience must have included primary involvement in the following areas: Conservatorships, Probate, Guardianships, or other closely related cases.

Deputy Public Defender III:

1. Two (2) years of experience as a Deputy Public Defender II in the San Diego County Public Defender's Office; OR,
2. Two (2) years of experience as an attorney at an equivalent level with another California county or city; OR,
3. Three (3) years of experience handling serious felony cases, juvenile dependency cases, and/or jury trials as the defense attorney of record.

Note: Positions in the Public Defender's Office at the level of Deputy Public Defender II or III require qualifying experience to be in either the criminal or dependency area. Combining your experience in the two areas in order to meet the minimum qualifications will NOT be accepted.

■ ESSENTIAL PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

The physical characteristics described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of the classification(s). Reasonable accommodation may be made to enable an individual with qualified disabilities to perform the essential functions of a job, on a case-by-case basis.

Continuous upward and downward flexion of the neck. Frequent: sitting, repetitive use of hands to operate computers, printers and copiers. Occasional: walking, standing, bending and twisting of neck, bending and twisting of waist, squatting, simple grasping, reaching above and below shoulder level, and lifting and carrying of files weighing up to 10 pounds.

■ SPECIAL NOTES, LICENSES, OR REQUIREMENTS

License

A valid California class C driver's license, which must be maintained throughout employment in this class, is required at time of appointment, or the ability to arrange necessary and timely transportation for field travel. Employees in this class may be required to use their own vehicle.

California Bar Association:

Active membership in good standing with the State Bar of California.

Working Conditions

Office environment; exposure to computer screens .

Background Investigation

Must have a reputation for honesty and trustworthiness. Misdemeanor and/or felony convictions may be disqualifying depending on type, number, severity, and recency. Prior to appointment, candidates will be subject to a background investigation.

Probationary Period

Incumbents appointed to permanent positions in these classes shall serve a probationary period of 12 months (Civil Service Rule 4.2.5).

New: September 30, 1983

Revised: April 6, 2001

Reviewed Spring 2004

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